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# ANNUAL REPORT

## 1953.

On the Health of the  
Rural Sanitary District  
of the  
Isle of Wight




BY

JOHN MILLS,

M.D., CH.B., M.R.C.S. (ENG.), L.R.C.P., (LOND.), D.P.H.

*Medical Officer of Health.*



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ANNUAL REPORT  
on the  
HEALTH OF THE RURAL SANITARY DISTRICT  
of the  
ISLE OF WIGHT.

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County Hall,  
Newport,  
Isle of Wight.  
April, 1955.

*To the Members of the Isle of Wight Rural District Council.*

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit the Annual Report on the health of the District for the year 1953.

The live birth rate has further decreased from 13.51 to 12.8 but the comparative birth rate is 14.7.

The death rate remains much the same 13.1, as in the previous year but the comparative death rate is only 9.2.

The infantile mortality rate has risen from 8.43 to 31.1. This is of no great significance as the numbers worked upon are so small.

During the year there were no deaths from measles, whooping cough, pneumonia or any of the other notifiable diseases.

A cyclical outbreak of measles occurred involving 471 cases and another outbreak of whooping cough accounted for 106 cases.

Various surveys have shown that two-thirds to three-quarters of the population suffer from whooping cough at at some time in their lives. No age is immune, but about 80 per cent of the cases occur in children below the age of five years and about 20 per cent in the first year.

Infants contract the disease very easily because no immunity is transmitted from the mother.

Girls are slightly more prone to the disease than boys and tend to suffer more severely.

Like most other infectious diseases, but in nothing like the same proportion, whooping cough mortality has fallen fairly steadily throughout this century.

Deaths from whooping cough now exceed those from diphtheria, scarlet fever, measles and smallpox put together, and in infancy it is one of the commonest fatal infections. The mortality is usually highest in March and lowest in October.

In England and Wales notification of cases of whooping cough became compulsory in 1939, though it is probable that less than half the cases that occur are ever notified.

Whooping cough may leave the lungs badly damaged but evidence of such damage may be delayed for months or years after the infection.

It has been stated that children lose more days from school per case than from any other communicable disease, and with none, apart from poliomyelitis, is the risk of permanent damage so great.

It will be seen then, that whooping cough is by no means a trivial childhood disorder.

Fortunately there is now available a vaccine which will diminish the incidence and severity of this disease.

The results of the Medical Research Council trial carried out between 1946 and 1950 were briefly as follows:—

In all, 7,558 children had been inoculated—3,801 with whooping cough vaccine, and 3,757 with a control.

The two groups were otherwise similar in every respect.

Only 149 vaccinated children developed whooping cough compared with 687 of the unvaccinated, a reduction of the incidence of the disease of 78 per cent. Of those who developed whooping cough, three-quarters of the inoculated children had mild attacks, but three-quarters of the uninoculated had attacks of moderate or greater severity.

The point has now been reached when provided vaccines of proved efficacy are used, the routine immunisation of babies against whooping cough can be confidently recommended.

Only one death from pulmonary tuberculosis occurred during the year, and only one death from non-pulmonary tuberculosis. Owing to the earlier diagnosis of affected persons and the great advances in treatment of the disease, pulmonary tuberculosis appears to be suffering its long awaited defeat.

Milk-borne tuberculous infections can only be prevented by the consumption of safe milk and the safest of milks is T.T. Pasteurized.

It should be remembered that milk from a T.T. herd, can, and often does, carry other germs which can produce human disease, such as typhoid, diphtheria, scarlet fever and undulant fever.

No cases of poliomyelitis or meningitis occurred during the year.

Because of the beauty of the Isle of Wight Rural District, coupled with the expense of family holidays even at modest hotels, an increasing number of visitors are turning towards holidays in caravans. In certain cases the visitors bring their own caravans but, because of the heavy charges on the ferries, these are very few. The majority of caravan holidays are spent in caravans permanently situated on licensed sites. The Council have devoted great care to the formulation of

rules for the protection of the health of the public on these sites and great vigilance is exercised to ensure that the regulations insisted upon are complied with. The owners of some sites are prepared, on their own initiative, to create model conditions for the comfort and well being of their visitors but others, alas, are reluctant to comply even with the very minimum requirements of the Council's regulations. The Council is always loathe to enforce its just requirements in Courts of Law but in matters of such grave importance as the preservation of public health and the prevention of communicable diseases it has wisely made it clear that it will tolerate no defaulters.

The occupation of various types of craft used as house-boats moored along the railway embankment at Bembridge has, from time to time given cause for anxiety from a public health point of view. The position there is under continuous observation and it will be a great step forward when such dwellings are removed.

A difficult problem has also been presented by large areas of rotting seaweed lying exposed along the beach between Ethel Point, Foreland and beyond.

In hot weather the nauseating effluvia has given cause for complaint and the Sanitary Inspector has devoted much of his time to the problem.

The Council is to be congratulated upon its efforts to deal with the housing shortage, great care and consideration being devoted to all housing matters. Certain sub-standard houses must be allowed to continue in occupation for some time further as it is better to have a sub-standard house than no house at all.

I am, Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,  
Your obedient Servant,  
JOHN MILLS,  
*Medical Officer of Health.*

**GENERAL STATISTICS.**

Population (Registrar General's figures) ... ..	17,630
Area (in acres) ... ..	58,127
Number of inhabited houses (end of 1953) ...	6,323
Rateable Value ... ..	£123,026
Sum represented by a penny rate ... ..	£488

**EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR.**

Live birth rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population ... ..	12.8
Comparative factor ... ..	1.15
Comparative Birth rate ... ..	14.7
Still Birth rate per 1,000 total (live and still births)	30.2
Crude Death rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population ... ..	13.1
Comparative factor ... ..	0.70
Comparative Death rate ... ..	9.2
Death rate from Puerperal causes per 1,000 (live and still births) ... ..	Nil
Death rate of infants under one year of age :—	
All infants per 1,000 live births ... ..	31.1
Legitimate infants per 1,000 live births ...	33.3
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births ... ..	Nil
Deaths from Measles (all ages) ... ..	Nil
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages) ... ..	Nil
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under two years of age) ...	Nil
Deaths from Cancer (all ages) ... ..	40

**PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS, 1953.**

Medical Officer of Health :—

John Mills, M.D., Ch.B., M.R.C.S. (Eng.),  
L.R.C.P. (Lond.), D.P.H.

Sanitary Inspectors :—

C. V. Smith, M.R.San.I.  
L. J. Lewis, A.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.

## **WATER.**

Water supplies were maintained throughout the year, and it was not necessary to take up with the Isle of Wight Water Board any cases of serious water shortage.

In the Parish of Bembridge there continued to be a certain irregularity of supply to the camping area of White-cliff Bay. This was partly due to heavy peak demands and partly to the small private service pipes supplying the area.

## **PUBLIC CONVENIENCES.**

A small public convenience was erected in Church Road, Niton, and a larger one at The Point, Bembridge ; these conveniences will meet longfelt demands in these areas. Public conveniences are also provided in Brading. None of these conveniences are large enough to require full-time attendants, and maintenance has to be carried out on a part-time basis. A certain amount of abuse of public conveniences has been evident, and while one realises that the majority of users are careful and considerate, abuse by the few can give rise to much inconvenience to all. With part-time attendants the immediate rectifying of abuses cannot be effective and some complaints have been made.

## **DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.**

### **East Wight.**

No major works of sewerage have been undertaken, but, in view of the many sewerage problems in the Rural District, the Council requested the Ministry of Housing and Local Government to send a representative to the Island to consider and advise on future policy and priorities. As a result, Mr. F. Brennand, a Senior Engineering Inspector, spent several days in the Rural District, and, in company with the Council's consultants and officials, considered the whole problem of sewerage of the Rural District. Following this visit, a letter dated 17th August, 1953, was received from the



Ministry of Housing and Local Government, which stated: “ . . . in general, the system of sea discharge of untreated sewage from coastal areas of the District is satisfactory, subject to modification in certain localities . . . ”.

Following the receipt of this report, the Council continued the consideration of several schemes which have been before them for some time.

### **Bembridge.**

In view of the continued building up of the sea bed around the outfall at The Point, increased difficulties have been experienced, and the Council instructed their consultants to report upon the continued use of this outfall and the possibility of diverting the flow from the outfall to the main outfall at Ethel Point.

### **Brading.**

Pollution of the outfall ditch continued, and, as no effective improvement could be made with the existing works, instructions were given to prepare a scheme for the replacement of the existing works by a modern and efficient purification works.

Minor works of sewer extension and improvement were also made in Swaines Road, Bembridge and at Blackgang, Chale.

### **West Wight.**

No major sewerage schemes were undertaken during the year. The schemes for the Parishes of Shorwell and Brighstone are still awaiting a starting date from the Ministry. Proposals for improvements to the Military Sewer Sea-Outfall have been submitted by the War Department, and referred to the Council's Consulting Engineers.

A new sewage purification plant is now operating at Alum Bay, and has enabled the catering establishments in this area to provide proper sanitary accommodation and

more hygienic methods of food preparation for the thousands of holiday-makers who visit this attractive part of the coast.

The Council have considered reports on periodic flooding in parts of Yarmouth, and the desirability of extending the sewer sea-outfall.

### REFUSE COLLECTION.

#### East Wight.

The refuse collection service continued to function in a satisfactory manner. This service covers the whole district. A weekly collection is given in Brading and Bembridge, and a fortnightly collection in all other parts of the district.

#### West Wight.

There is a weekly collection of refuse in the Parishes of Freshwater, Totland, and Yarmouth, and a fortnightly collection in all other Parishes in the West Wight. Refuse is deposited by controlled tipping at Churchills Quarry, and on the mud-flats at Yarmouth, where it is providing very useful land reclamation.

The following schedule gives particulars with regard to the operation of the refuse collection service during the year :

	<i>No. of Vehicles.</i>	<i>Refuse Collected, Cubic yds.</i>	<i>No. of Vehicle Loads.</i>	<i>Total Mileage.</i>	<i>Disposal of Refuse.</i>
East Wight	One full time in Bem- bridge and Brading. One spends half time in East Wight, half time in West Wight	No figures	760	13,500	1.—Tip at Yaverland, Brading.  2.—Tip at Bleakdown, Godshill.
West Wight	One used for Freshwater, Totland, and Yar- mouth. One other shared with East Wight	13,000 approx.	1,250	10,693	Yarmouth Land Reclamation Area and Churchill's Quarry

## **CESS PIT EMPTYING SERVICE.**

### **East Wight.**

The Council do not own a cesspit emptier, but hire a machine when required from Ryde, Sandown or Ventnor. A routine service was not in operation, but pits were emptied upon application :—

1. If they had not been emptied during the past three months ;
2. If they were overflowing or likely to overflow in the near future.

Total number of cesspits emptied—175.

### **West Wight.**

The Council's dual purpose refuse collection and cesspool cleansing vehicle no longer operates, and premises are served by a machine when required on hire from Ryde Borough and Ventnor Urban District Council.

## **HOSTELS.**

### **East Wight.**

Y.H.A. Hostel, Whitwell. Main Water. Drainage to cesspool. Public refuse collection.

### **West Wight.**

Weston Manor Hostel, Totland. Mains water supply, main drainage, weekly collection of refuse.

## **HUTTED CAMPS.**

### **East Wight.**

Nil.

### **West Wight.**

Solent Riviera Camping Site, Thorness. 26 huts. W.Cs. and wash basins to sewage disposal plant. Mains water supply. Refuse destroyed by incineration, and periodically collected by Council's vehicle.

## HOUSING.

### East Wight.

The building of new houses still continues to ease the housing situation, but new house building has done little to replace the old, low-standard house. These houses continue to present a major housing problem in the Rural District. While the housing shortage continues the Council are reluctant to apply Section 11 of the Housing Act, 1936, and the occupation of these low-standard houses has continued. Undertakings not to allow re-occupation were received in respect of five houses, one of which was subsequently demolished by the owner.

### SCHEDULE.

Parish			Council Houses completed 1953	Under construction 31st December, 1953
Bembridge	...	...	10	—
Brading	...	...	14	—
Chale	...	...	—	—
Gatcombe	...	...	—	—
Godshill	...	...	—	—
Newchurch	...	...	6	—
Niton	...	...	—	—
South Arreton	...	...	—	4

### West Wight.

Tenants of eight totally unfit houses at Middleton, Freshwater, were re-housed by the Council, and the houses demolished by the Council after acquiring the site by agreement with the owner. Plans are prepared for the erection of old peoples' dwellings on the site.

Two totally unfit houses in Victoria Road, Freshwater, were demolished by agreement with the estate executors.

## SCHEDULE.

Parish			Council Houses completed 1953	Under construction 31st December, 1953
Brighstone	...	...	4	2
Calbourne	...	...	3	—
Freshwater	...	...	17	3
Shalfleet	...	...	3	—
Shorwell	...	...	—	—
Totland	...	...	3	2
Yarmouth	...	...	—	—

## WORK OF THE SANITARY STAFF.

					<i>East Wight</i>	<i>West Wight</i>
Total number of visits of inspection made	...			...	1305	1386
Houses inspected	...	...	...	...	84	126
Houses re-inspected	...	...	...	...	146	153
Cowstables and dairies	...	...	...	...	17	15
Food preparing premises	...	...	...	...	89	76
Meat and other foods inspection	...	...	...	...	107	65
Drains and sewers	...	...	...	...	249	256
Water supplies	...	...	...	...	31	10
Refuse collection	...	...	...	...	206	225
Various	...	...	...	...	593	260
New buildings and alterations	...	...	...	...	229	250

## FACTORIES ACT, 1937.

## East and West Wight.

Particulars on the administration of the Factories Act, 1937, Parts I and VIII administered by the District Council.

## 1. INSPECTIONS. **Part I of the Act.**

For purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors.)

Premises	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written notices	Occupiers prosecuted
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities...	90	35	1	—
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority ... ..	36	16	2	—
(iii) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises) ... ..	—	—	—	—
Total ... ..	126	51	3	—

## 2. CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND.

(If defects are discovered at the premises on two, three or more separate occasions they are reckoned as two, three or more "cases").

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness (S.1) ... ..	3	3	—	—	—
Overcrowding (S.2) ... ..	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature (S.3) ... ..	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation (S.4) ... ..	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6) ... ..	1	1	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)					
(a) insufficient ... ..	2	2	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective ... ..	2	1	—	—	—
(c) Not separate for sexes ... ..	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork)	—	—	—	—	—
Total ... ..	8	7	—	—	—

## PART VIII OF THE ACT.

### Outwork (Sections 110 and 111).

#### Section 110.

Number of out-workers in August list required by Section 110(1) (c)	...	...	...	...	...	...	—
Number of cases of default in sending lists to the Council							—
Number of prosecutions for failure to supply lists						...	—

#### Section 111.

Number of instances of work in unwholesome premises							—
Notices served	...	...	...	...	...	...	—
Prosecutions	...	...	...	...	...	...	—

## INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

The following table shows the amount of unsound food dealt with during the year :—

Home Killed Meat	...	...	...	153 lbs.
Imported Meat	...	...	...	122 lbs.
Tinned Fruit	...	...	...	76 lbs.
Canned Meat	...	...	...	395 lbs.
Fish ... ..	...	...	...	31 stone
Other Goods	...	...	...	30 lbs.

## FOOD AND DRUGS (MILK AND DAIRIES) ACTS, 1944.

Number of samples taken for T.B. during the year 1953	...	...	...	...	...	418
Number of samples found to be positive				...	...	3
Number of samples in which Brucella Abortus was isolated	...	...	...	...	...	34

Pasteurising premises have been subject to supervision and samples of pasteurised milk from these premises have been taken at the rate of two samples monthly. The results for the year under review were 100 per cent satisfactory.

### NOTIFIABLE DISEASES DURING THE YEAR.

There were 612 notifications of infectious diseases, 471 being of measles and 106 of Whooping Cough.

<i>Disease.</i>					<i>Total cases notified.</i>	<i>Cases admitted to hospital.</i>
Measles	...	...	...	...	471	4
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	...	10	3
Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	—	—
Food Poisoning	...	...	...	...	6	—
Meningococcal Infection	...	...	...	...	—	—
Erysipelas	...	...	...	...	1	1
Puerperal Pyrexia	...	...	...	...	5	—
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	12	1
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	...	...	...	...	—	—
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	106	—
Acute Inf. Encephalitis	...	...	...	...	—	—
Acute Polioencephalitis	...	...	...	...	—	—
Acute Poliomyelitis	...	...	...	...	—	—
Dysentery	...	...	...	...	1	—
Totals	...	...	...	...	612	9



**NON-NOTIFIABLE INFECTIOUS DISEASES.**

The prevalence of non-notifiable Infectious Diseases is estimated from the weekly returns of the Head Teachers of the Schools. These returns for the year show that there were 106 cases of Chicken Pox, 151 of Mumps, and 58 of German Measles.

**AGE AT DATE OF NOTIFICATION.**

Age.	Scarlet Fever	Diphtheria	Puerperal Pyrexia	Pneumonia	Meningococcal Infection	Measles	Whooping Cough	Erysipelas	Acute Poliomyelitis	Food Poisoning	Ophthalmia Neonatorum	Dysentery
Under 1	—	—	—	—	—	7	3	—	—	—	—	—
1 and under 2	—	—	—	—	—	28	5	—	—	—	—	—
2 „ „ 3	—	—	—	1	—	34	12	—	—	1	—	—
3 „ „ 4	—	—	—	—	—	46	10	—	—	1	—	—
4 „ „ 5	—	—	—	—	—	51	12	—	—	—	—	—
5 „ „ 10	7	—	—	1	—	241	56	—	—	1	—	1
10 „ „ 15	2	—	—	—	—	35	4	—	—	—	—	—
15 „ „ 20	—	—	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	—	—
20 „ „ 35	1	—	5	1	—	16	3	—	—	1	—	—
35 „ „ 45	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—
45 „ „ 65	—	—	—	3	—	5	1	—	—	1	—	—
65 and over	—	—	—	6	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	—
Totals	10	—	5	12	—	471	106	1	—	6	—	1

## NOTIFIABLE DISEASES IN PARISHES.

Parish.	Scarlet Fever.	Diphtheria.	Whooping Cough.	Puerperal Pyrexia.	Pneumonia.	Meningococcal Infection.	Measles.	Erysipelas.	Acute Polymyelitis.	Food Poisoning	Ophthalmia Neonatorum.	Dysentery.
Arreton	—	—	9	—	1	—	10	—	—	—	—	—
Bembridge	2	—	1	—	—	—	62	1	—	1	—	—
Brading	1	—	19	—	1	—	77	—	—	—	—	—
Brighstone	—	—	—	—	1	—	29	—	—	—	—	—
Brooke	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	—
Calbourne	—	—	1	—	—	—	14	—	—	—	—	—
Chale	2	—	6	1	1	—	26	—	—	3	—	—
Freshwater	1	—	42	2	—	—	21	—	—	—	—	—
Gatcombe	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
Godshill	1	—	1	—	—	—	16	—	—	—	—	—
Merstone	—	—	—	1	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
Newchurch	—	—	2	1	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	—
Newtown	—	—	—	—	—	—	21	—	—	—	—	1
Niton	—	—	10	—	3	—	42	—	—	2	—	—
Rookley	1	—	1	—	—	—	7	—	—	—	—	—
Shalfleet	—	—	—	—	—	—	28	—	—	—	—	—
Shorwell	—	—	—	—	4	—	55	—	—	—	—	—
Totland	2	—	1	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—
Whitwell	—	—	5	—	—	—	14	—	—	—	—	—
Yarmouth	—	—	7	—	—	—	33	—	—	—	—	—
Totals	10	—	106	5	12	—	471	1	—	6	—	1

**TUBERCULOSIS.**

Age Periods.	New Cases.					Deaths.				
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Totals	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Totals
	M.	F.	M.	F.		M.	F.	M.	F.	
Under 1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1 and under 5	3	1	—	1	1	—	—	1	—	—
5 „ „ 10	4	—	1	3	—	—	—	—	—	—
10 „ „ 15	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
15 „ „ 20	3	1	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
20 „ „ 25	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
25 „ „ 35	4	—	4	—	—	1	1	—	—	—
35 „ „ 45	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
45 „ „ 55	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
55 „ „ 65	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 and upwards	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals	*19	6	7	4	2	2	1	—	1	—

\* Included in this total are four transfers from the mainland.

**OPHTHALMIA NEONATORUM.**

Notified.	Cases.		Vision im- paired.	Vision impaired.	Total Blindness.	Death.
	Treated.					
	At home	In hospital				
—	—	—	—	—	—	—

## CAUSES OF DEATH.

<i>Cause.</i>	<i>Male.</i>	<i>Female.</i>
Tuberculosis, respiratory ... ..	1	—
Tuberculosis, other ... ..	1	—
Syphilitic disease ... ..	—	—
Diphtheria ... ..	—	—
Whooping Cough ... ..	—	—
Meningococcal infections ... ..	—	—
Acute Poliomyelitis ... ..	—	—
Measles ... ..	—	—
Other infective and parasitic diseases ... ..	—	—
Malignant neoplasm, stomach ... ..	5	3
Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus ... ..	5	1
Malignant neoplasm, breast ... ..	—	2
Malignant neoplasm, uterus ... ..	—	2
Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms ... ..	10	12
Leukaemia, aleukaemia ... ..	2	—
Diabetes ... ..	1	2
Vascular lesions of nervous system ... ..	10	18
Coronary disease, angina ... ..	27	12
Hypertension with heart disease ... ..	—	7
Other heart disease ... ..	14	22
Other circulatory disease ... ..	6	5
Influenza ... ..	3	1
Pneumonia ... ..	2	5
Bronchitis ... ..	7	5
Other diseases of respiratory system ... ..	1	2
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum ... ..	3	—
Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea ... ..	—	—
Nephritis and nephrosis ... ..	—	—
Hyperplasia of prostate ... ..	8	—
Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion ... ..	—	—
Congenital malformations ... ..	1	—
Other defined and ill-defined diseases ... ..	13	8
Motor vehicle accidents ... ..	—	—
All other accidents ... ..	2	2
Suicide ... ..	—	—
Homicide and operations of war ... ..	—	—
All causes ... ..	122	109



